

# CHAOS—OFFICIAL

Gloom sends  
pound diving

**Industry, food,  
jobs in peril**

**besieged Britain**

**Drivers  
rapped**

**Crisis Briefing—**

**Army moves in**

Pound takes  
a battering

CRISIS

**CHAOS Lorry strikers  
turn the screw**

Pickaxe

**Premier doomed?**

MIRROR  
IMAGE



20p

AN INSIGHT INTO HOW THE DAILY MIRROR HANDLED  
THE LORRY DRIVERS STRIKE OF JAN '79



HERE IT IS (AT LAST). JUST IN TIME FOR  
THE NEXT "WINTER OF DISCONTENT"?



CORMAC



COVER PICTURE  
P.2. 24/1/79.

## PREFACE.

I don't normally watch the tele or read ordinary newspapers because they make me sick. It's incredible the way they use words to distort issues or gloss over them, but still give the impression of being fair and impartial.

As all ordinary types of media get their money from investors or advertisers, and are owned by capitalists or the state, they tend to be biased towards them. The support of these ruling classes of owners, bureaucrats, politicians or business people is vital for an ordinary paper or T.V. company to survive, so they are able to control what is said and how it's said.

When ordinary people start to challenge the system which keeps the ruling classes in their privileged positions the media will naturally try to turn us against them by labelling them "wreckers", "extremists" or "trouble makers".

I'm not suggesting that Editors literally cry "Oh no, the threat of working class".

P.1.



solidarity, we must smash this to maintain our owners interests!!" Its a bit subtler than that. People don't get to a position of power in the paper's hierarchy unless they've accepted the owners outlook on life. Reporters know, almost instinctively, what they should write to advance their careers.

Anyway, it just so happens that I saw alot of the Daily Mirror this January and I decided "they've got away with it" for too long. I hope this pamphlet will do something to help put things to rights and further undermine the sick joke they call a democracy so that something better can take its place.

I dedicate this pamphlet to anyone who has been harmed by someone who is good with words - and that must be nearly everyone.

## INTRODUCTION

(Despite the recent Tory victory in the general election I still reckon that...)

Thesedays its not the outright right wing fanatics who form the main threat to human joy and dignity. Intelligent rulers prefer to use "sensible capitalism" where a benevolent state runs your life and leaders decide everything except which T.V. channel you watch. If you don't accept sensible capitalism then you're dismissed as an extremist who wants more than the irrelevant haggling over minor differences known as "fierce political debate". Most people accept their exploitation and lack of power as normal. We're all in the same boat and its the leaders job to steer it.

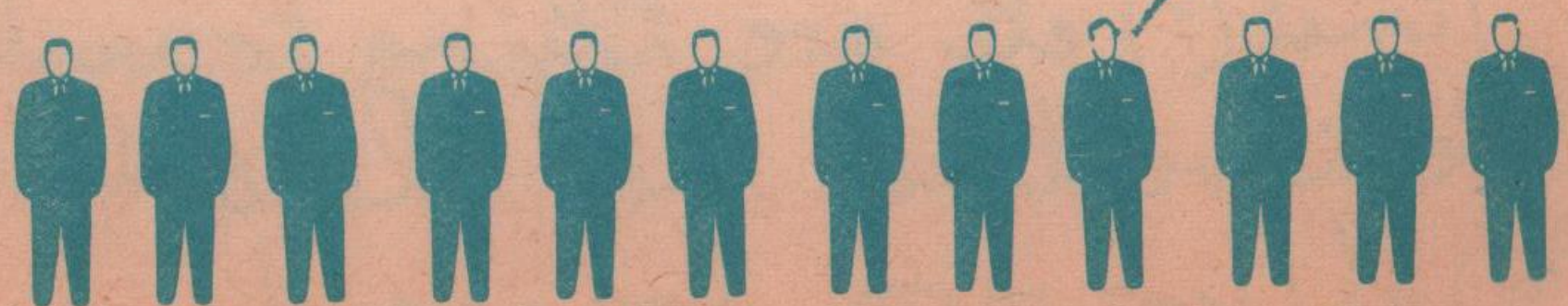
Papers like the Mirror, Guardian, Hithits Angles Times(?) etc are trying to make people believe these sad ideas, but its not straightforward propaganda you



pay for, there's a web of assumptions, implications and key words that get you seeing things their way without even considering an alternative. Read on and I hope you'll see what I mean.

I didn't have the time, energy or inclination to include the way they use lies, omissions, exodurations or the relative positioning of articles and pictures to further distort things - that's another story.

All underlinings in this pamphlet are put in by me, not the Mirror, and all references are from P.1 or P.2.



IT'S NOT MUCH FUN  
BUT IT'S EFFICIENT

## POLITICAL CONTEXT.

This is an attempt to explain what I mean by "the ruling classes" etc. We are involved in a class struggle; by which I mean that we are all just fighting together against the forces of nature and the laws of economics. There are people who want the emotional and material poverty in the world to remain or even grow; not usually out of pure sadism but because they profit from it and can't see a better way to survive.

The division between the ruling classes and "the rest" / the workers is not clear cut. Some office workers can act for or against the rulers depending on several factors. However there are a set of ideas the ruling classes want us to swallow and, because they've got the power, these ideas are the ones we get fed by the T.V., in school, from the papers etc.







keep their heads above water is by standing on us. Perhaps some of them think they can tell us, but they're all terrified that we might try and tell ourselves.

As an anarchist, that is what I see as the cause of our political problems - people are too impressed by authority and status. We forget our own power, and what we could do together if we decided to.

There are many examples of people taking control of their own lives on a large scale - the best being mass collectivisation during the Spanish Civil War. Normally these fail because a new class of leaders (e.g. Marxist intellectuals, technical experts or bureaucrats) take over, or because the forces of repression are too strong.

Perhaps you think it's always got to be that way - well I don't.

OK, here goes...

Despite one or two references to "bosses opinions" capitalists have ceased to exist so far as the Daily Mirror is concerned. Nowadays we're all part of one big national family where everyone can have their say... if they wait their turn.

So, when workers strike, it's not that they're fighting their exploiters. They're "being selfish and hurting the nation", the "sensible" Labour government, fellow workers or housewives.

On the 10th a page one article starts "Pickets eased off the brakes yesterday to get Britain on the move", though on the 18th "Britain was being 'held to ransom' and on the 19th the strike 'brought Britain to a halt'. Jim had 'hopes of filling empty food shelves for housewives and the Mirror calls the strike 'the biggest threat to



working class living standards for decades" (15th, P.2)

The C.B.I. (or "boss's union") was mainly concerned that "everyone has taken a punch on the chin" (15th, P.2). "Misery for millions" cries the page one article on the 5th and Marilyn Rees tells us that "we're so interdependent that small (small!?) groups of workers can bring the community (ie the nation/state etc) to a halt". Len Murray calls for the T.U.C. to "act coherently" - whatever that may mean.

The message is clear - disruption causes misery but never change. Why spoil "everyone's" fun by fighting exploitation? Given the right spirit we can all work together ("Goodbye goodwill" reads the headlines on the 6th) to make Britain, or at least its ruling classes, great again.

Of course it's always us who have to be reasonable and accept a cut

in living standards so their profits don't drop too much, or even keep rising. The P.M. "trusts and hopes" we will see sense. (16th)

### CRISIS BRIEFING (P.2.)

The Mirror wants us to believe that strikes are just pointless and nasty... the choice is ours - "prosperity or paralysis" (8th). They seem to like that phrase "paralysing strike", well they use it a lot. It suggests something negative and pointless, much better than "effective" or "successful", which might encourage trouble-makers. The Mirror reckons strikes cause "strife" and "chaos" (two more suitably negative words) but never change. How could they? Leader change things, we either go along with what they say or cause trouble for everyone else. We aren't capable of running our own lives... but more about leaders later.

What is the Mirror's alternative to



choos? Peace, "a hint of peace" (8th) "the fight for peace" (20th). Oh for a return to peaceful exploitation - what a "ray of hope". It doesn't matter if the strikers get anywhere, as long as they go back and stop rocking the boat.

"Hopes rose yesterday for a speedy end to the dispute" (29th) Not a "successful" or even a "just" end, but a speedy end. You see strikes are "a problem". That's why army blacklegs pumped "life" into Northern Ireland and the government wants to sort out the problems surrounding picketing" (13th)

PICKETS PUT ON A STRANGLEHOLD (15th)  
Of course it's the unions that start strikes, not the low pay, bad conditions or emptiness of work, and certainly not because a bunch of parasites (eg Dunny Jim) are doing their best to make our lives a misery.

"The crisis is being caused by rebel drivers strike action" (5th) and it's always "the men have rejected", never "they were only offered". As the chairman of the C.B.I. says "Only the unions can avoid disaster" He's not suggesting a revolution or even a general strike, basically he thinks they should give in - what's called "reaching a sensible agreement".

It follows that if the unions are causing all the trouble then they must be too powerful for the ruling classes... oops, sorry, the nations good. These swarming men who can "bring the north to its knees" and put "strangleholds" on the first thing that takes their fancy. "They're out of control" (15th) and may cause a "backlash". Ah yes, the dreaded Tory backlash.

THATCHER BASHES STRIKERS (11th)

The Mirror's only alternative to a Labour government enforcing Tory policies is a



Tory government being even worse. Ms. Thatcher "shocking trade unionists" and dropping bombshells in an attempt to "curb union power" (etc). Things may be bad now, but they could get alot worse if we don't do what that nice Mr Callaghan and his experts tell us to do.

Mrs Merlyn Rees thinks trade unionists should "accept some limitations" on their ~~are~~ right to strike, but the Mirror ensures us "there is no question of a Labour government forcing it on workers." (They'd just use the threat of Tories doing so as persuasion). Its come to something when a Tory is telling trade unionists what they should do, but she is a leader so I suppose she's obliged to give an opinion. She thinks they should restrict themselves to keeping one step behind inflation (or as she puts it "fighting for a decent wage") and not bother trying to

change the system.

What about "the Labour alternative"? Sensible democrats, such as Jim, are very impressed by the set up in West Germany which is a virtual police state in which many leading politicians are ex Hitler youth - still they do have less strikes than us, because union leaders work hand in glove with the state (even worse than ours). Still, who needs freedom if the pays good?

On the 9th Lord Carr suggests we handle our unofficial strike problem (its no problem to me lol) like other countries - through legislation (ie repression) and Jack Jones would like to see an improvement in "industrial relations". Thats what its all about, getting on better with the people who are exploiting you. Presumably the present system is our only option so we have to make the best of it - the possibility of real



change does not exist

In Britain strikes have become "the resort of men too impatient to talk" (10th). That's the sensible persons answer to all our problems - arbitration. Not that it did the Grunwick strikes any good, still if we're content to play their game and let them run our lives they will soon "put things right" (8th, p.2) with an "agreed" code of picketing.

It would be nice if we lived in a society where "everyone working together" didn't just mean us doing what they want. Maybe one day we will, but till then we've got to fight for what we want instead of giving up our power to a supposedly "independent" tribunal, where even the trade union representative is looking at the situation through the boss's limitations.

The new ruling classes, such as the Labour Party, know that there is no

need to rely on repression, except in N. Ireland, which isn't part of Britain anyway. As Jim said (19th, p.2) "there's more chance of success from a deal with transport workers leader Moss Evans".

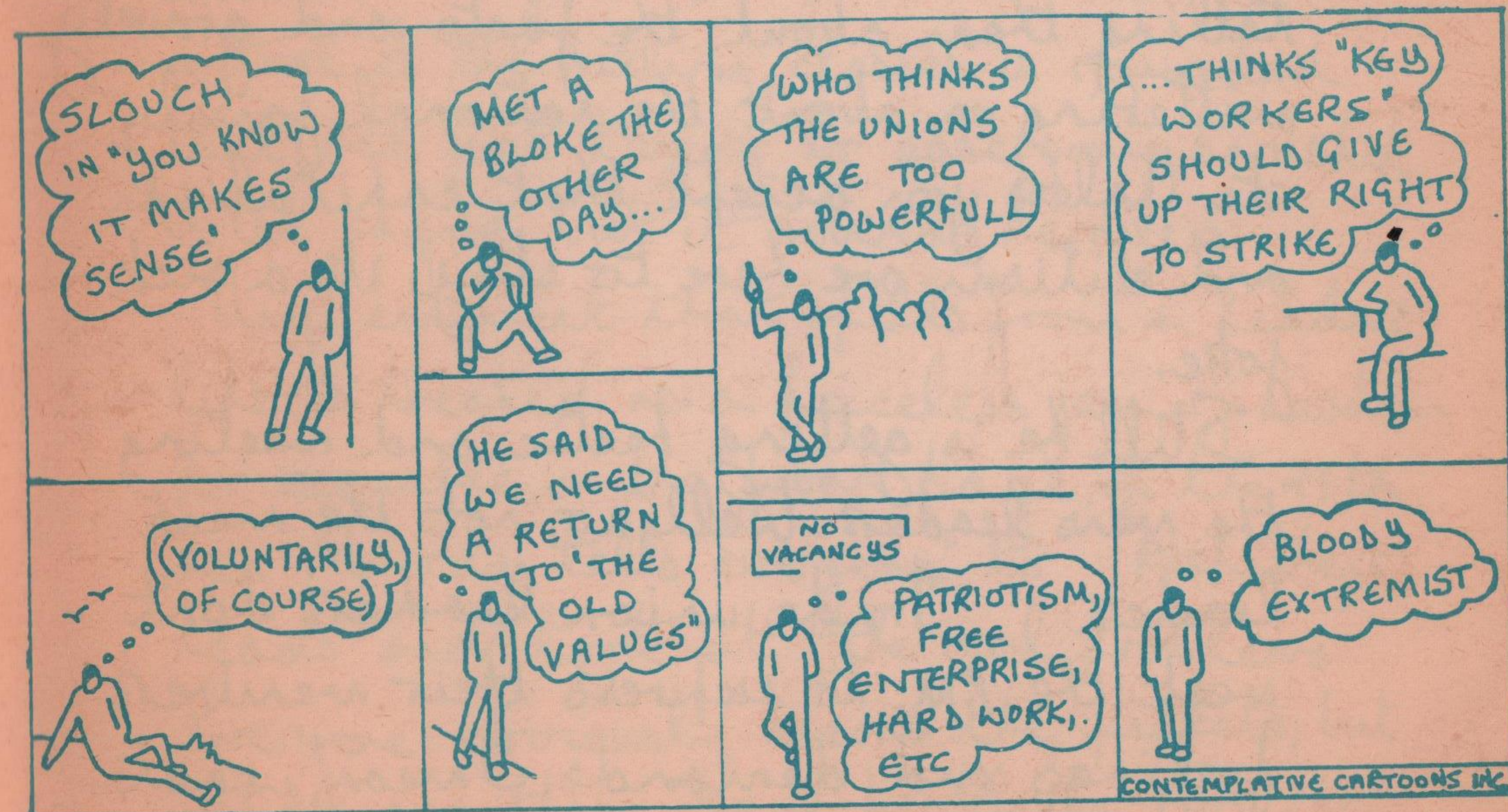
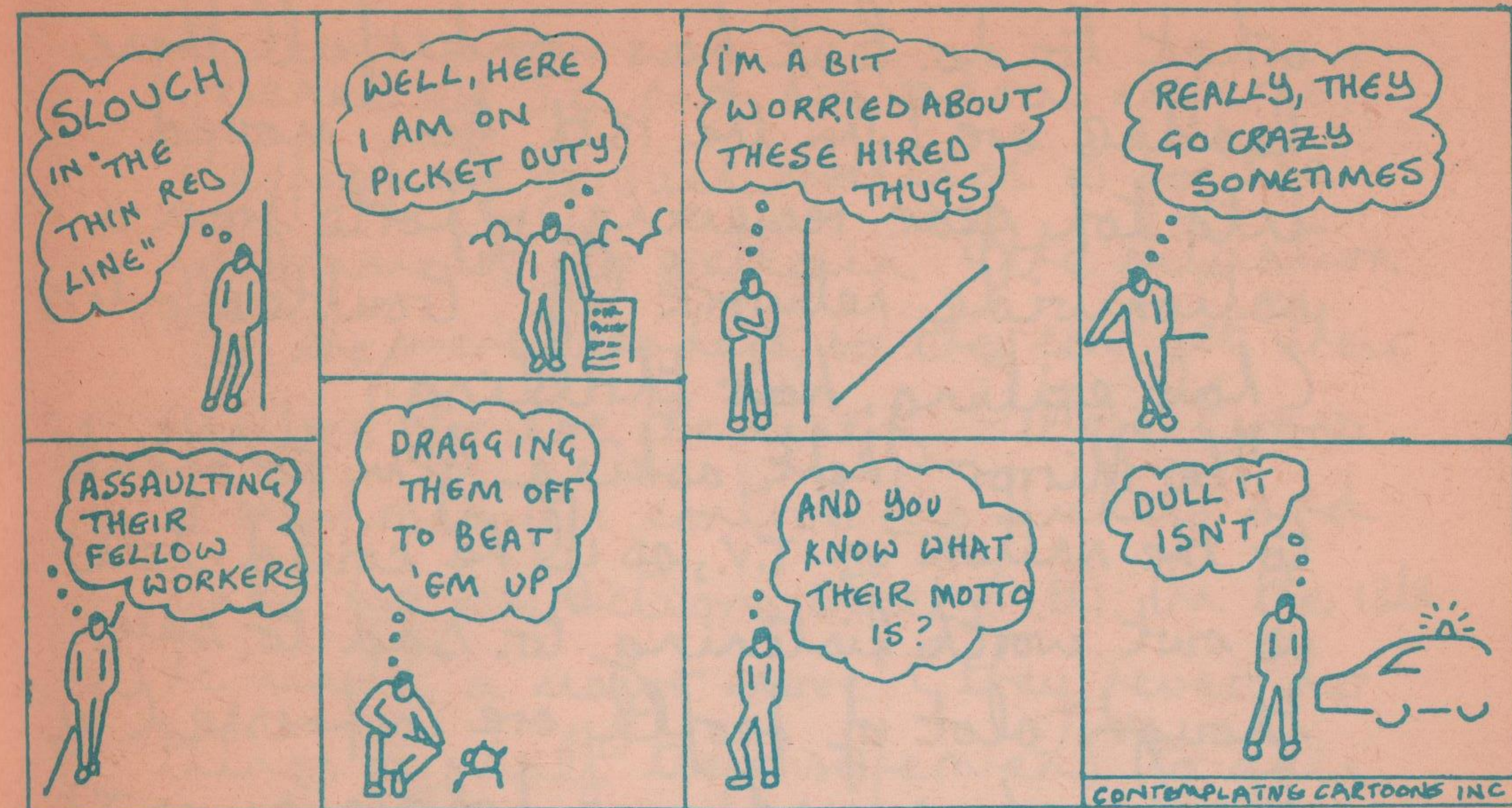
Which brings us back to the question of leaders.



## Now Jim's AT THE WHEEL (13th)

How reassuring

Leaders, that's what the Mirror's all about. Politicians, leaders and experts do everything and know everything. We, the ignorant masses, either follow their directions or become troublemakers. If we take action on our own behalf it's something to be ashamed of. I guess that's why, on the 18th, p.2, one of the workers leaders "admitted" that they couldn't win the dispute without using pickets. Could you imagine Uncle Jim "admitting" that he couldn't end the strike without using conciliation? The Mirror goes out of its way to show picketing as a sub-human activity (eg. the picture on the front of the pamphlet) and turn us against it. Instead it wants us to wait quietly while the various leaders draw up "official charters" for us and tell us





what to do. But how wonderfull these leaders are! On the 13th Jim "moved into top gear" recieving reports from a nationwide network of "troubleshooters" (how exciting, how thrilling)

The Mirror kept asking Jim to speak to the nation on T.V., as if he could tell us owt worth listening to. Sad to say though alot of people are impressed by even such a mediocre politician as J.C. telling them about "the facts" and gravely wittering on about "the national family" etc. Unless you accept that capitalism and elitism are here to stay its a sick joke.

Still he is getting " hectic" and meeting "the mens leaders". Well, no, not the mens leaders. Trade union leaders don't meet the P.M. to express their members feelings and demands. I mean, what significance could the ignorant opinions of ordinary people have in the

presence of J.C. and his various experts?

The purpose of such meetings is for the government to explain the situation to "the mens" leaders, so they can get "their members" to toe the line. Moss Evans is supposed to "control his pickets" and "make his instructions stick" (19th). On the 13th he "made a major move" (they never do things by half these supermen) "to gain control". Anyone who thinks Mr Evans is a tool of the ruling classes is reminded that he's just trying to "ease some hardship" A bit vague, but it sounds harmless.

Any comment that spills from a leaders lips is treated as a priceless gem of wisdom. For example, on the front page of the 19th Len Murray tells "everyone" to "keep their heads and look at the real problems". "Everyone" obviously means the pickets, but what are these "real problems". Not the ones we see - our reality doesn't mean a thing, thats the important point.



The real problems are the ones experts and leaders know about and deal with. Perhaps we'll be told more when they think the time is right. Till then let's leave us with a bit of divine guidance "don't run on to the field and take the whistle out of the referee's mouth" - you what?

Leaders know "the truth", or do they. Is it really just their opinions? Well, yes, it is, but not according to the Mirror, leaders know that's just the way things are, it's not their fault. "The cabinet may have no option" (20th) "the P.M. will have no alternative", or to use one of the Mirror's favourite phrases "the only alternative is (whatever)". On page one of the 8th they say "unless the present insanity is ended the outcome is inevitable". Is it really insane to want to change this society? Nothing is inevitable unless you accept it is, and it's this acceptance that they're trying to subtly (?) feed into us. "The truth" (?) of it must be repeated again and

again" (8th) until we're all totally brainwashed.

Some people know more about certain things than others, but anyone's opinion should be open to question. Not just that you're allowed to ask a question (maybe) if you phrase it "correctly" and then you get a wishy washy, evasive reply or just get effectively ignored. We must have more respect for how we see things from our own experience and to tell if it doesn't match with the accepted way of expressing yourself. Always expect a reply that you are satisfied with and keep control of your life from what you experience as real.

Above all, don't just leave it to the experts.



## "JIMS BLAST" (24th)

This is meant to be a democracy, so to give us some significance they go on about "public opinion" or "the will of the nation". Something that can be manipulated and that leaders can hide behind.

For example, Jim warns on the 24th (p.2) that if "the nation's patience" runs out he will have to (see, he's really got no choice)... he will have to "shackle the trade unions with the overwhelming discipline of the country". Who does this creep think he is? What he means to an ordinary human being is that if the investors and owners don't like what we're doing then a labour government will gladly bring in the legislation needed to keep us under control. He also gets away with implying that the nation's patience is running out without having to prove it - once more a leader's view is given as fact.

True the Mirror can't be held responsible for Jim's sick mind, but they do let it up

and plaster it all over their front two pages (yuck!). To the Mirror public opinion means passive audiences lapping up the opinions of "experts" and occasionally voting for how they get ripped off for the next five years. Even if we were all free to say what we think, in this society it's the people with the money who can afford to get their message across.

Another thing the Mirror don't like (which I forgot to mention earlier) is working class solidarity. Our rulers are scared shitless at the thought of ordinary people getting together to run their own lives, not that it's exactly common on a large scale, but it could catch on. Referring to people carrying foodstuffs the Mirror says (24th) "The dispute has nothing to do with them or their employers" and refers on the 13th to "firms not connected with the pay rumpus". Wasn't it Marilyn Rees who said we are "so interdependent". Hopefully there will be more solidarity and struggles will



continue to develop beyond just "more pay"

There's a bit more to say about public opinion. A trick the Mirror uses when quoting leaders of opinion is to present the barest large headlines, as fact, then add "said x". On the 15th, p.2. the headline is "Pickets put on a stranglehold" followed by a paragraph telling us that "unless it ends immediately the region will be choked" etc. The next paragraph tells you this is "the C.B.I.'s gloomy prediction" but the lasting impression is fact - their emotive words eg "choked" get in your head as fact. The article then uses a similar trick by having "a spokesman said" followed by a long quote which, by the time you've read to the end gets associated with the "facts" that follow. In this case they don't even bother closing the speech marks at the end - pretty blatant, eh?

In comparison quotes from ordinary people are short and simple, presumably because we haven't got much worth saying, but anyway they're meaningless because there's nothing to prove that they represent

a general feeling. Ordinary people tend to be vague and unsure, but they leave you with an impression. "39 year old Brian Green" says on the 25th "I'm sure the majority of drivers think...."

Well, thank you Brian, let's see what you and the Mirror reckon the majority of drivers think.

### "CONVOY OF HOPE" (25th)

What a phrase. Could you imagine a flying picket being described as a 'line of hope', and can "250 feet of drivers" really be an impressive message of hope? What about the hundreds of pickets "strangling the north"? If nothing else that's impressive. No, the Mirror wouldn't want to encourage trouble makers - it likes us to think of strikers as a bolshy minority who are intimidating men anxious for a "return to peace". Even 65 lorries is described as a "massive convoy". I've lost the bit about nutty housewives "riding shotgun" to get the



persuade their husbands to go back to work - still I'm sure I can remember most of it. There's not a lot to remember really, it's simply a case of the media getting women to play out this role then reporting it as their spontaneous reaction.

The Mirror and all it stands for is pathetic - we will win because we are more lovely (and can run faster) (?) .....

This is the end, or is it....?

PERSONALLY  
I CAN'T WAIT  
FOR THE NEXT  
GENERAL STRIKE



P.28

## HOW THE "EXTRAORDINARY" PAPERS SEE IT. (FROM "FREEDOM" 6/10/79)

One of the most important events for years was the lorry drivers' strike in 1978, which brought the British economy in some sectors to a standstill, in others UNDER CONTROL OF THE INDEPENDANT STRIKE COMMITTEES - i.e. essential goods and services. Whole towns could only function with the supervision of the lorry drivers, for example Middlesbrough and Warrington, where no goods moved in or out without authorisation of pickets et up on all routes. They also sent pickets to all distribution centres. The Union (TGWU) hierarchy was never in control of the members although it tried, and it and the Labour government virtually begged them to return, not to work, but to 'normal' strike tactics. They didn't issue orders, send in the army or the police because they were terrified of two things - a) The seemingly unlimited determination and power of the strikers, b) The escalation of the dispute into a general shut-down of industry: this would have caused an emergency social situation which could have been solved by the development of the lorry drivers' committees, joining with other groups of workers, into WORKERS' COUNCILS to take over the management of each town and area. And fuck me if that's not what we've wanted for 100 years. A dual power, revolutionary situation! Suffice to say they got their demands in full.



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